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AMERICAN REALISM EXHIBITION OPENS AT THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

American Realism and the Industrial Age, an exhibition of more than 45 works by approximately 40 American artists, will be on view at The Cleveland Museum of Art from November 12, 1980 through January 25, 1981. The development of the American Realism exhibition was inspired by the major exhibition, The Realist Tradition: French Painting and Drawing, 1830-1900, on view at the Museum from November 12, 1980 through January 18, 1981. ^{while} ~~Where~~ the major exhibition includes a consideration of the industrialization of France and the work of a number of French Realist artists who concerned themselves with various aspects of industrialization in France, ^{among} ~~other themes~~, the central focus of the American Realism exhibition is the industrial age as it was viewed by American artists. The exhibition focuses on artist's attitudes toward industry and technology from the early nineteenth century through the early 1970s.

Since an exhibition of ^{limited size} ~~limited scale~~ could not possibly include or attempt to refer to all the American works of art that are linked to the theme of industrialization, American Realism and the Industrial Age ^{uses} ~~utilizes~~ a representative selection of paintings, prints, and drawings from several historical periods to illustrate the changing moods and attitudes of American artists and society.

This small but cohesive group of works by American Realist artists serves to demonstrate the continuing tradition of a concern for facts in American art as well as the wide variety of artist's attitudes toward technology and manufacturing.

2-american realism and the industrial age

~~Many~~
~~Some~~
Early nineteenth century artists produced paintings which reflected a fascination with mechanical processes and the potential drama of technology. Others were more interested in the visual aspects of the industrial landscape and used the angular contours of its architecture and the masses of ^{smoke} black smudge that hovered over the factory environment for pictorial compositions. ~~Some~~ artists and illustrators represented the conflict between labor and capital with this theme gaining prominence during the depression years.

Among artists represented in the exhibition are Bass Otis (1784-1861), Thomas Moran (1837-1926), Thomas P. Anshutz (1851-1912), Winslow Homer (1836-1910), Joseph Pennell (1857-1926), Ben Shahn (1898-1969), George Bellows (1882-1925), Joseph Stella (1877-1946), Carl Frederick Gaertner (1898-1952), Charles Sheeler (1883-1965), Thomas Hart Benton (1889-1975), Raphael Soyer (b. 1899), Reginald Marsh (1898-1954), and Don Eddy (b. 1944).

Subject matter of the works is varied including steamboats and locomotives, steel works and stock yards, riverviews and industrial landscapes, sweatshops, a gun foundry, ^a steam turbine, coke works, blast furnaces, smelting works, and an automobile showroom.

American Realism and the Industrial Age was organized by Marianne Doezema, assistant curator in the Department of Art History and Education at The Cleveland Museum of Art. Ms. Doezema also wrote the catalog which accompanies the exhibition. Both the catalog and the exhibition are divided into six chronological sections: 19th Century Views of Industrialization; Illustration; Industry and the City; Precisionism and the Factory; Art of the Depression; and Recent Realism. Doezema points out that, "An investigation of the tradition of industrial subjects in American art is best carried out in relation to a consideration of American social history." This relationship is central to the catalog text. The catalog also considers the problem of defining realism and especially the difficulty with attempting to distinguish the characteristics of American realism.

3-american realism in the industrial age

The catalog is one of a series of paperback books about art, art history, and artistic expression published in the Museum's Art History and Education Department's Themes in Art Series under the general editorship of Dr. Gabriel P. Weisberg, curator of Art History and Education at the Museum. These books are available at the Museum Sales Desk. Cost of the American Realism catalog is \$6. (*\$3 if purchased at the Museum during the exhibition*)

Ms. Doezeema will discuss some of the ideas her exhibition explores in her lecture, American Realism and the Industrial Age, to be offered at the Museum on Sunday, December 21, 1980, at 3:30 pm. Admission is free and open to all.

Two free short films about art and artists related to the exhibition will also be offered. On Wednesday, December 31, 1980, at 12:30 pm, American Realists, Part 1 will be shown. This film surveys American painters of various Realist persuasions, from colonial times to the Armory Show of 1913. On Wednesday, January 7, 1981, at 12:30 and 7:00 pm, American Realists, Part 2, will be shown, featuring works by Reginald Marsh, Stuart Davis, and Charles Demuth.

Free gallery talks, presented in the exhibition by Ms. Doezeema, will be offered on Wednesday, November 19, and Sunday, November 23, 1980 at 1:30 pm.

Following the Cleveland showing, American Realism and the Industrial Age, will travel to the Kenneth C. Beck Center for the Cultural Arts (February 18-March 15) and the Columbus Museum of Art (April 11-May 31). Both the exhibition and the catalog are supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. *1981*

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